

CHAPTER I

THE NORMAN CONQUEST

WHEN Melus lit the fire of revolt in Bari, he could count upon the Lombard dynasts to back up his cause. Gaimar IV. of Salerno and the Pandulfs of Benevento and Capua believed that the hour was come for the expulsion of the Greeks; they entered into terms with the armed levies of the Apulian towns, and communicated with the rebels by the defiles between Benevento and Ascoli. The revolt, however, had at first little to show; the Catapan Basil recovered Bari in 1010, and Melus was driven into exile, first to the Lombard princes, then to the court of Henry II. whom he begged to intervene. Again returning in 1015 to his native country, he made the pilgrimage to Monte Gargano, and there at the end of the year he had that interview with a band of Norman pilgrims which was to bear such astonishing fruit.

One of the most eventful meetings in history had